

# **The Avenue Surgery**

## **How can I make a complaint?**

If you have a complaint or concern about the service you have received from the doctors or any of the staff working in the Practice, please let us know. We operate a Practice complaints procedure as part of the NHS system for dealing with complaints. Our complaints system meets national criteria.

### **How to complain**

We hope that most of the problems can be sorted out easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. If your problem cannot be sorted out in this way and you wish to make a complaint, we would like you to let us know as soon as possible. If it is not possible to do that, please let us have details of your complaint:

- Within 12 months of the date on which the event occurred: or
- Within 12 months of the date on which the event comes to the complainant's notice (provided the complaint is made no later than 12 months after the date of the event)

Complaints should be addressed to the Practice Manager in writing. A complaints form is available at Reception. Alternatively you may ask for an appointment with the Manager to discuss your concerns. The complaints procedure will be explained to you to make sure that your concerns are dealt with promptly. Try to be as specific as possible about your complaint.

### **Action upon receipt of a complaint**

We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days and aim to respond to your complaint within ten working days of the date you raised it with us, unless there are exceptional circumstances. We shall then be in a position to offer you an explanation or a meeting with the people involved.

When we look at your complaint, we aim to:

- Find out what happened and what went wrong.
- Make it possible for you to discuss the problem with those concerned if you would like to.
- Make sure you receive an apology, where this is appropriate.
- Identify what we can do to make sure the problem does not happen again.

At the end of the investigation your complaint will be discussed with you in detail, either in person or in writing.

## **Complaining on behalf of someone else**

Please note that we keep strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality. If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, we have to know that you have their permission to do so. A note signed by the person concerned will be needed, unless they are incapable (because of illness) of providing this.

## **If you are unhappy with the outcome of a complaint**

We hope that if you have a problem you will use our Practice complaints procedure. We believe this will give us the best opportunity to resolve your complaint and the opportunity to improve our practice.

Alternatively you may wish to contact Healthwatch:

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove  
Community Base  
113 Queens Road  
Brighton BN1 3XG

Information Line: 01273 23 40 40 (09:30 – 12:30 Monday to Friday)

Email: [info@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk)

Enquiries: 01273 23 40 41

Email: [office@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk](mailto:office@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk)

Website: <http://www.healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/>

If you want some support to take your complaint further, then you can also contact the Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service (IHCAS) which is provided to Brighton & Hove by PoHwer. You can contact them on 0300 456 2370 or [pohwer@pohwer.net](mailto:pohwer@pohwer.net).

We aim to resolve all complaints but if you are not satisfied with this response you have the right to take your complaint to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) which makes final decisions on unresolved complaints about the NHS in England. It is an independent service which is free for everyone to use. To take your complaint to the Ombudsman, visit the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman website <http://www.ombudsman.org.uk/make-a-complaint> or call 0345 015 4033 (08:30 – 17:00 Monday – Thursday and 08:30 to 12pm Friday).

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